



# Regulation of Slingshot-1 activity by gelsolin-generated soluble actin filaments and the role of a PH-like domain in Slingshot-1 activity

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URL	<a href="http://hdl.handle.net/10097/60022">http://hdl.handle.net/10097/60022</a>

博士論文（要約）

**Regulation of Slingshot-1 activity by gelsolin-generated soluble actin  
filaments and the role of a PH-like domain in Slingshot-1 activity**

(ゲルゾリンによって産生される可溶性アクチン繊維と PH 様ドメイン  
によるスリングショット - 1 の活性調節)

平成 26 年度

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## Preface

Cofilin plays an important role in the regulation of actin filament dynamics during cell migration and morphogenesis by severing and depolymerizing actin filaments [1, 2]. Actin-severing and -depolymerizing activity of cofilin is inhibited by phosphorylation at Ser-3 by LIM-kinases (LIMKs) and testicular protein kinases (TESKs) [3–5] and is reactivated by dephosphorylation by Slingshot (SSH) family protein phosphatases, composed of SSH1, SSH2 and SSH3 in mammals [6–8]. SSH1 binds to filamentous actin (F-actin), and the cofilin-phosphatase activity of SSH1 is dramatically increased by its binding to F-actin [6–12]. During stimulus-induced cell migration, SSH1 accumulates into the F-actin-rich lamellipodia at the front of migrating cells [9, 13]. These results suggest that SSH1 is involved in cell migration by activating cofilin and promoting actin filament turnover in lamellipodia at the leading edge of migrating cells [9, 13]. However, little is known about the molecular mechanisms of regulation of SSH1 activity.

In chapter I of this thesis, I showed the novel mechanism of SSH1 activation in the cytoplasm, in which SSH1 is activated by gelsolin (GSN)-generated cytosolic actin filaments. I identified GSN, scinderin (SCIN), and several actin-binding proteins as SSH1-binding proteins by proteomic analysis. GSN and SCIN belong to a GSN superfamily and play important roles in actin remodeling by severing actin filaments, capping the plus ends of actin filaments, and nucleation of actin assembly [14, 15]. I also showed that SSH1 indirectly binds to GSN via soluble actin filaments in the cytosolic fraction. Previous studies demonstrated that cytoskeletal insoluble actin filaments promote SSH1 activation, but I show here that the GSN-generated soluble actin filaments also activate SSH1 in cell-free assays and in cultured cells. GSN overexpression promoted neuregulin (NRG)-induced cofilin dephosphorylation in MCF-7 cells, and latrunculin A (LatA), an inhibitor of actin polymerization, suppressed the effect of GSN on NRG-induced cofilin dephosphorylation. These results suggest that SSH1 is activated by

GSN-generated soluble actin filaments in the cytoplasm and that cytoplasmic SSH1 is also involved in NRG-induced cofilin dephosphorylation and cell migration. Most of the results in Chapter I were reported [16].

In chapter II of this thesis, I analyzed the role of a pleckstrin homology (PH)-like domain of SSH1 in regulating its cofilin-phosphatase activity. Previous studies demonstrated that F-actin binds to and activates SSH1 and that the N-terminal non-catalytic region of SSH1 (termed SSH-N domain, composed of conserved "A" and "B" domains) is involved in its F-actin-mediated activation. In this study, I found that SSH1 has a PH-like domain in the region crossing over the N-terminal "A" and "B" domains by the secondary structure prediction analysis. Since the PH domains are generally known to bind phospholipids, I performed phospholipid blot assays and found that SSH1 specifically associates with phosphatidylserine (PS) through its N-terminal region (amino acids 1-461). Although the basic residues in the N-terminal  $\beta 1$  and  $\beta 2$  strands of the PH domains were shown to constitute the phospholipid-binding site, replacements of these basic residues (Arg-96, Arg-104 and Arg-106) in the PH-like domain of SSH1 did not affect its PS-binding activity, and the incubation with PS did not affect the cofilin-phosphatase activity of SSH1. By contrast, the replacements of these basic residues in the PH-like domain of SSH1 inhibited its binding to actin filaments and suppressed its cofilin-phosphatase activity in the presence of F-actin. These results suggest that the PH-like domain of SSH1 plays a crucial role in the cofilin-phosphatase activity of SSH1 by binding to F-actin.

## **Chapter I**

**Activation of cytosolic Slingshot-1 phosphatase by gelsolin-generated soluble actin filaments**

Regulation of actin filament dynamics is essential for cell migration and morphogenesis. Cofilin plays a fundamental role in actin filament dynamics and remodeling by severing and depolymerizing actin filaments [1, 2]. Cofilin is inactivated by phosphorylation at Ser-3 by LIMKs and TESKs [3–5], and is reactivated by dephosphorylation by SSH family protein phosphatases, composed of SSH1, SSH2 and SSH3 in mammals [6–8]. The cofilin-phosphatase activity of SSH1 is markedly enhanced by its binding to F-actin [6–12]. Upon stimulation with growth factors or chemokines, SSH1 accumulates into F-actin-rich lamellipodia at the front of migrating cells [9, 13]. These observations suggest that SSH1 plays a critical role in cell migration by activating cofilin and thereby promoting actin filament turnover in lamellipodia [9, 13]. On the other hand, a considerable proportion of SSH1 is diffusely distributed in the cytoplasm. However, it remains unknown whether cytosolic SSH1 binds to and is activated by soluble (low-level polymerized) actin filaments.

Gelsolin (GSN) and its closely related scinderin (SCIN) are  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$ -dependent actin-binding proteins that exhibit multiple actin-regulating functions, such as severing of actin filaments, capping of the plus ends of actin filaments, and nucleation of actin assembly [14, 15]. The severing and capping activities of GSN produce GSN-capped short actin filaments. Thus, GSN plays an important role in cell migration and morphogenesis through the regulation of actin filament dynamics and reorganization [14, 15, 17].

In this study, I examined the novel activation mechanism of SSH1 by GSN-generated cytosolic short actin filaments. I identified GSN, SCIN, and several actin-binding proteins as SSH1-binding proteins by proteomic analysis. We also showed that SSH1 binds to GSN via soluble actin filaments in the cytosolic fraction. Previous studies demonstrated that cytoskeletal insoluble F-actin promotes SSH1 activity, but I showed that the GSN-generated soluble actin filaments also activate the cofilin-phosphatase activity of SSH1 in vitro. GSN overexpression promoted neuregulin (NRG)-induced cofilin dephosphorylation in MCF-7 cells, and latrunculin

A, an inhibitor of actin polymerization, suppressed the effect of GSN overexpression on cofilin dephosphorylation. These results suggest that SSH1 is activated by GSN-generated soluble actin filaments in the cytoplasm and is involved in cofilin dephosphorylation during the migration of NRG-stimulated MCF-7 cells.



## **Chapter II**

**A pleckstrin homology-like domain of Slingshot-1 is critical for its cofilin phosphatase activity by binding to actin filaments**

The pleckstrin homology (PH) domain is a protein module composed of approximately 100 amino acid residues and is found in a wide variety of proteins involved in signal-transduction, cytoskeletal organization, intracellular trafficking and phospholipid processing [18, 19]. The PH domains have an almost identical core structure, consisting of strongly bent seven-stranded anti-parallel  $\beta$ -strands, closed on one end by a C-terminal  $\alpha$ -helix. The basic residues located near the  $\beta$ 1 and  $\beta$ 2 strands of the PH domain form the binding site of phospholipid headgroups. The PH domains play a crucial role in translocation of proteins to the plasma membrane depending on local lipid concentration, resulting in local activation of proteins, such as Akt, 3-phosphoinositide-dependent protein kinase 1 (PDK1) and phospholipase C- $\gamma$  (PLC- $\gamma$ ) [20–23].

The PH domain plays a role in recognition of phospholipids but also mediates protein-protein interactions. A subset of PH domains, including those of Bruton's tyrosine kinase (Btk), Emt tyrosine kinase, oxysterol-binding protein (OSBP), and pleckstrin (both N- and C-terminal PH domains), binds to actin filaments and the basic residues near the  $\beta$ 1 and  $\beta$ 2 strands in their PH domains form an F-actin-binding site [24]. The PH domain of Btk is required for its localization to the actin cytoskeleton. The PH domain of PLC- $\gamma$ 2 lacks the corresponding basic residues in the  $\beta$ 1 strand and has no actin-binding capacity, but its mutant with substitutions of three amino acids by lysine residues in the  $\beta$ 1 strand gains actin-binding ability, which suggests that the basic residues in the  $\beta$ 1 strand are essential for actin recognition [24].

Slingshot-1 (SSH1) is a protein phosphatase, which specifically dephosphorylates and activates cofilin and regulates actin cytoskeletal reorganization and directional cell migration by dephosphorylating and activating cofilin [6]. Previous studies revealed that F-actin binds to and dramatically activates SSH1, and the N-terminal non-catalytic region of SSH1 (called SSH-N domain composed of “A” and “B” domains) (Fig. 8A), is required for F-actin-mediated activation of the cofilin-phosphatase activity of SSH1 [6–12].

To understand the molecular mechanism of SSH1 activation, I analyzed the secondary structure of SSH1. The secondary structure prediction analysis suggests that the N-terminal region of SSH1 contains a PH-like domain in the region spanning between the "A" and "B" domains. Since the PH domains are generally known to bind phospholipids, I performed phospholipid blot assays and found that SSH1 specifically associates with phosphatidylserine (PS) through its N-terminal region (amino acids 1-461). Although the basic residues in the  $\beta 1/\beta 2$  loop of the PH domain commonly form phospholipids-binding sites, replacements of the basic residues to acidic residues or alanine in the  $\beta 1/\beta 2$  loop of the PH-like domain of SSH1(1-461) did not affect its PS-binding ability, and the incubation with PS did not affect the cofilin-phosphatase activity of SSH1. By contrast, replacements of the basic residues in the  $\beta 1/\beta 2$  loop of the PH-like domain inhibited the association of SSH1 with actin and suppressed the cofilin-phosphatase activity of SSH1 in the presence of F-actin. Furthermore, I also showed that while the PH-like domain of SSH1 co-localized with actin filaments in HeLa cells, a mutant of the PH-like domain of SSH1 did not co-localize with actin filaments. These results suggest that the PH-like domain of SSH1 is essential for actin-binding and cofilin-phosphatase activities of SSH1.

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